

ANN MARIE THRO

**National Program Leader, Plant Breeding and Genomics
CSREES (Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service)
Plant and Animal Systems
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C.**

Currently Science Fellow, U.S. Embassy Vienna

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE

- Served ten years as Assistant and Associate Professor at Louisiana State University. Eight years research and teaching on campus, one year sabbatical with CGIAR (CIAT); one year Technical Advisor, National Program for Grain Legumes, Congo (then Zaire), Africa (SECID/USAID).
- Joined the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Colombia, in 1992, as Coordinator of the global Cassava Biotechnology Network, a voluntary network dedicated to mobilizing the positive potential of biotechnology for a neglected crop of small farmers in the tropics.
- In 1999, joined USDA as Commissioner of the Plant Variety Protection Office, which serves the U.S. and international plant breeding communities through award of Plant Breeders' Rights.
- Since 2001, serving as National Program Leader for Plant Breeding and Genomics in USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, providing liaison to the federal-state partnership in this discipline area.

EDUCATION

- B.A. Cum Laude 1971, History and Languages, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA, USA
(1969-70, Dickenson College, w/ Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Bologna, Italy)
- B.S. 1976, Agronomy, VPI Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA, USA
- Graduate Study 1980-81, Institute of Plant Breeding, Hohenheim Univ., Stuttgart, Germany (DAAD Fellow)
- Ph.D. 1982 (M.S. 1980), Plant Breeding and Genetics, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, USA

Languages: Native English; fluent in German, Spanish and French; reading ability in Portuguese

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

National Program Leader for Plant Genetics and Genomics, USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, 2001-present

Liaison to the federal-state partnership in plant breeding and genomics in state agricultural experiment stations. Strategic and bureaucratic responsibilities to ensure optimal use of federal funds for scientific progress and public benefit.

Commissioner, USDA/ AMS/ ST/ Plant Variety Protection Office (PVPO), 1999-2001

The PVPO administers the Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA), which provides intellectual property protection rights to developers of new varieties of seed- or tuber-propagated plants. The commissioner is responsible for ensuring the integrity and efficiency of the examination process; for customer service, public outreach, and information; and represents the U.S. to the international Union on Plant Variety Protection (UPOV) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Coordinator, Cassava Biotechnology Network, 1992-98, Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical-CIAT

Management of a voluntary global network with an annual budget of US \$300,000. The Coordinator integrated perspectives of small-scale farm-to-market actors in biotechnology priority setting, and fostered collaborative research with advanced labs and participatory research in developing countries, toward the goal of realizing the value of cassava for food security and economic development in the developing

tropics. In addition to small farmer contact and development of research projects to link advanced labs and national programs of developing countries, the Coordinator organized international meetings and served as liaison with European and other donors.

Technical Advisor, National Grain Legume Program, Zaire (now DR Congo) Jan 1991- April 92, USAID/SECID, on assignment from Louisiana State University Agricultural Center

A 3-yr project for food crops production, terminated early due to civil unrest. As technical advisor, I was the only international staff at a field station in the interior. Provided on-the-job training to MS-level national scientists responsible for cultivar development in common beans, peanuts, cowpeas, and soybeans.

Visiting Scientist, Sabbatical year, 1989-90, CIAT, Cali, Colombia

Member of a team that developed an efficient vector-mediated system for genetic transformation of *Stylosanthes guianensis*, a tropical pasture legume

Assistant (1982-89) and Associate Professor (1989-92) of Agronomy, Louisiana State University

Introduction of legumes to improve summer pasture quality on acid soils, Southeastern USA. Developed and taught graduate-level plant breeding course; in cooperation with Southern University (HBCU), initiated and co-led the first field course in international agriculture for Louisiana students. State rep., National Plant Germplasm System, Southern Region Technical Advisory Committee, 1986-1990

Graduate Student: International Harvester Dissertation Fellow, 1980-82; Dept. Research Asst., 1978-80; National Science Foundation Fellow 1977-78; Dept. Teaching Asst., 1976-77. Iowa State Univ. Agronomy Dept., Ames, Iowa, USA. German Academic Exchange Service Research Fellow, Hohenheim University, Germany, 1980

Small grains breeding, disease resistance gene deployment, introgression of wild related species into cultivated crop, genetic improvement of grain nutritional quality

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Nineteen journal articles; two book chapters; four volumes of proceedings edited; 14 proceedings articles; 19 presentations invited and 21 volunteered; 20 articles in science news, farm/popular press, newsletters, and brochures; 10 special reports and position papers.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Team coordinator, external final review of the USAID Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project (ABSP), 2001. The ten-year ABSP project involved transgenic pest-resistant potatoes, produced through U.S. – Egyptian cooperation, which have not been commercialized due to concerns regarding possible loss of the European market.

Short term case studies, stakeholder participation, proposal development, project reviews, public dialogue, donor liaison in Brazil, P.R. China, France, Indonesia, Kenya, Netherlands, Nigeria, Rep. Dominicana, Rwanda, Senegal, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, United Kingdom, Vietnam